

Message Text

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16

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 OMB-01 IO-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 RSR-01 /094 W

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R 040607 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7099

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2011

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: DOMESTIC POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

REF: SEOUL 1955

BEGIN SUMMARY: AS A RESULT OF AGREEMENT AMONG FLOOR LEADERS/ EXTRAORDINARY ASSEMBLY SESSION IS EXPECTED TO OPEN MAY 10 AND LAST TWO WEEKS, FOLLOWING NDP CONVENTION. UNDER YU CHIN- SAN, NDP LEADERSHIP APPEARS READY TO ESCHEW CONFRONTATION WITH GOVERNMENT FOR BARGAINING AND COOPERATION, AND TO ACQUIESCE IN HARMONIOUS OPERATION OF ASSEMBLY WITH A MINIMUM OF CONTROVERSY. END SUMMARY.

1. FLOOR LEADERS OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY'S NEGOTIATION GROUPS (DRP, NDP AND REVITALIZATION GROUP-- RG) HAVE AGREED TO CONVOKE EXTRAORDINARY ASSEMBLY SESSION ON OR ABOUT MAY 10 FOR APPROXIMATELY 2 WEEKS.

2. AGENDA HAS NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE NOT YET AGREED. ASSEMBLY SPEAKER CHONG IL- KWON TOLD REPORTERS MARCH 26 HE EXPECTED EXTRAORDINARY SESSION WOULD HEAR BRIEFINGS FROM MINISTRIES AND THAT THERE WOULD BE INTERPELLATIONS. IN ADDITION, BOTH DRP AND NDP HAVE INDICATED THEY WILL SEEK CHANGES IN SOME OF LAWS PASSED BY EXTRAORDINARY STATE COUNCIL BEFORE NEW ASSEMBLY OPENED. DRP INDICATED IT WOULD SEEK MODIFICATION OF SEVERAL CON-
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TROVERSIAL LAWS INCLUDING THOSE REGULATING FAMILY RITUALS AND FORESTATION (REFTTEL PARA 3). NDP FORMED SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO STUDY BILLS PASSED BY COUNCIL AND HAS SINGLED OUT 11 WHICH IT SAYS ENCROACH ON INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBASSY, NUMBER OF OPPOSITION LEADERS HAVE MENTIONED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION LAW, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY LAW AND POLITICAL PARTY LAW AS CONTAINING OBJECTIONABLE FEATURES WHICH THEY WILL SEEK TO MODIFY, THOUGH THEY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT CHANCES OF ACHIEVING SIGNIFICANT CHANGES SEEM REMOTE.

3. AS REQUEST OF NDP, ASSEMBLY SESSION IN MAY WILL COME AFTER PARTY' S CONVENTION, WHICH IS NOW TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR MAY 7-8. PARTY HAS ALREADY BEGUN REORGANIZATION OF LOCAL CHAPTERS IN PREPARATION FOR CONVENTION, A PROCESS DURING WHICH YU CHIN- SAN IS EXPECTED TO FURTHER CONSOLIDATE HIS ALREADY FIRM CONTROL OVER THE PARTY. YU' S LEADERSHIP IS NOT EVEN EXPECTED TO BE CONTESTED AT THE CONVENTION, A MEASURE OF HIS CONTROL OVER THE PARTY. WHILE RIVALRIES AND DIVISIONS WITHIN PARTY REMAIN, MOST IMPORTANT PARTY MEMBERS APPARENTLY SEE NO ALTERNATIVE UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS TO YU' S CONTINUED LEADERSHIP.

4. NDP' S PERFORMANCE SINCE YU' S RETURN AS PARTY LEADER HAS REFLECTED HIS PREFERENCE FOR BARGAINING AND COOPERATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION IN DEALINGS WITH GOVERNMENT AND DRP. PARTY FOR EXAMPLE HAS DECIDED NOT TO ENCOURAGE OR DISCOURAGE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS FROM BRINGING LAWSUITS IN DISTRICTS WHERE ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES TOOK PLACE DURING FEBRUARY ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. THIS IS DECIDED CHANGE FROM PAST NDP PRACTICE, WHEN IT SOUGHT TO CAPITALIZE ON SUCH CASES BOTH IN AND OUT OF COURT TO GAIN PUBLICITY AND PUT GOVERNMENT ON DEFENSIVE. THERE HAS BEEN NO TALKS WITHIN PARTY OF BOYCOTTS, " STRUGGLES" OR OTHER EXTREME TACTICS USED IN PAST TO DRAMATIZE OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT ACTIONS. ON THE CONTRARY, PARTY' S LEADERSHIP SEEMS WILLING TO ACQUIESCE IN HARMONIOUS OPERATION OF THE ASSEMBLY WITH A MINIMUM OF CONTROVERSY.

HABIB

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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